Robin Pepper

Disability Conference, Keynote Speaker

On the 9th of October 2010, I attended the keynote address at the Disability Studies Conference titled: “*The Color of Violence: Towards a Transnational Feminist Disability Studies Perspective”*, by Nirmala Erevelles. The conference was very informative discussing today’s issues of disability in society. Erevelles discusses women’s role in disability and uses many examples of critical points in recent history to demonstrate not only disabled women’s struggles but all disabled people’s struggles. She used Hurricane Katrina and the War in both Iraq and Afghanistan as a point in presentation to tell her audience of how disabled people were affected by these events and she even touched on the more recent disaster in Haiti and how disabled people there were affected. Nirmala Erevelles’s main point from these examples though was how little the media was concerned with the people with disabilities in society, that they were unseen and mostly invisible.

I thought that the keynote speech was very well structured and well put. Erevelles gave many examples in history that I could relate to and understand their importance. She told the audience how important it was to recognize the disabled during these huge events but the people in this group continued to go unnoticed. I appreciated the lecture given by Nirmala Erevelles and I felt I kept up with her speech but when it came the Q&A I couldn’t keep up with the name dropping and recent studies of disability. I learned a lot from another perspective on disability in today’s society as compared to other writers from the Disability Reader.